THE TRIAL OF THE TEMPLARS

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EIS QUI VERITATEM DILIGUNT

PREFACE

It is hoped that this essay will interest the general reader as well as the historian and theologian. To that end two departures have been made from modern custom. The exhaustive (and usually indiscriminate) Bibliography has been omitted. Many works have been consulted to which no reference is made. But nothing beyond ornament is gained by the formal custom of naming three books when one covers the whole ground. This display of names, so far from helping the student to pursue the subject, often disappoints him by sending him on a useless quest to a volume that has been eviscerated in three lines of the text.

Secondly, the passion for footnotes has been severely checked. What Gibbon practised as an art has in modern usage been venerated as a fetish. References to special sources may reasonably be demanded. But it is unnecessary for the historian who keeps near to his authorities to cite most of them except at long intervals. Asides and qualifications that cannot find a place in the text are hardly worthy of a place anywhere. The principle followed here is to give references usually only for points of special interest or to less obvious sources. A multitude of notes may make us seem more learned than we are, but that is no great advantage to the reader.

As to the subject itself, the appeal of the story of the Templars should be general. For its value is not that of an incident in the history of monasticism, but that of a picture of mediæval life. It is a picture that should go some way towards counteracting the illusion once popular that the Middle Ages, by virtue of faith and chivalry, guilds and maypoles, were years of unabating sunshine and merriment. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the life of the worker in the dreariest English industrial town to-day is infinitely cleaner, brighter, happier, more healthy, more humane, and more moral than any life in mediæval England. That is the only legitimate inference we can draw from history, unless we assent to the monumental aphorism of Henry Ford that "History is bunk."

I am in the debt of the many scholars named in the text, who have already cut a way through the tangle. More personal thanks I offer to my old friend Professor Garmon Jones of Liverpool, who, having read the proofs, restrained many of my follies. Those that survive are my own.

The Trial of the Templars

I

One of the greatest difficulties in writing history is selection. The historian has at times to pick his way through a forest of material, where he must have the eye to distinguish the important from the unimportant, where from the important he must make a choice, neither so large as to be a wearisome copy of undigested documents, nor so small as to appear only a collection of disconnected notes. He must be able to recognize the point beyond which additional evidence can add no further proof to his argument, while he has to show that he has neither overlooked nor disregarded that additional matter which he knows could only encumber his treatment of the subject. The history of the Downfall of the Templars is made difficult to write because of such circumstances. Outside actual historical writings there is a large mass of printed documents, Calendars, correspondence of kings and officials, minutes of evidence. Dupuy,[1] Wilkins,[2] Raynouard,[3] Michelet,[4] Prutz,[5] Schott-

[1] *Histoire de la Condemnation des Templiers.* Brussels, 1713.

[2] In *Concilia Magnæ Britanniæ*, vol ii. London, 1737.

[3] *Monumens historiques relatifs à la Condemnation des Chevaliers du Temple. . . .* Paris, 1813.

[4] *Procès des Templiers.* Paris, 1841–51.

[5] *Entwicklung und Untergang des Tempelherrenordens.* Berlin, 1888.

müller,[1] and Dr. Finke,[2] to mention no others, have either edited documents or printed them as supplements to their own writings. Even so, Dr. Finke considers that in England and elsewhere there is still unexamined material. Among the chief historians the subject has been fully treated and criticized, in Germany by Prutz, Schottmüller and Finke; in France by Lavocat,[3] by Langlois in Lavisse's *Histoire de France*, and by Lizerand in his book on *Philippe le Bel*.[4] In English there is the *History of the Knights Templars*, by C. G. Addison, now an old book, having been published in 1842, but good and carefully documented; there is also a full and sound treatment in Lea's *History of the Inquisition in the Middle Ages*. Besides the accounts given by the general historians like Milman in *The History of Latin Christianity*, which may still be considered valuable, there is a characteristic essay by Froude in *The Spanish Story of the Armada*, and several articles in scientific historical journals, which may be classed rather as material for history than actual history. The most important of these are an essay of J. Kenrick, dealing with the Yorkshire Templars, in a volume called *A Selection of Papers on Archæology and History* (London, 1864), and two articles by Professor Perkins on the English Templars in the *English Historical Review*.[5]

[1] *Der Untergang des Templerordens.* Berlin, 1887.
[2] *Papsttum und Untergang des Templerordens.* Münster, 1907.
[3] *Procès des frères et de l'ordre du Temple.* Paris, 1888.
[4] G. Lizerand. *Clement V et Philippe le Bel.* Paris, 1920.
[5] Vol. xxiv, 1909, pp. 432–47, and vol. xxv, 1910, pp. 209–30.

These bibliographical notes are not intended in any way to be complete, but they may give some idea of the extent of the material that has to be digested before a fair opinion on the work and failure of the Templars can be hazarded.[1]

[1] A handy selection of documents is now available, *Le Dossier de l'Affaire des Templiers*, ed. G. Lizerand, Paris, 1923. A good bibliography of the known literature and authorities is given in G. Mollat, *Les Papes d'Avignon*. Paris. 2ème ed., 1912. Sir John Macdonnell's essay in his *Historical Trials*, Oxford, 1927, is valuable as the opinion of a trained jurist. He believes the Order innocent, though individual members may have given ground for *vehemens suspicio*.

II

THE origin of the Order of the Temple was a side-issue in the struggle between Christianity and Islam, more particularly in the less vital but more violent part of that struggle which had for its immediate object the possession of the Holy Land of Palestine. Since Palestine had fallen into the hands of the Mohammedans in the seventh century, the Roman Emperors at Constantinople had been powerless to recover it, if, indeed, they had the desire. For several hundred years no obstacle was placed in the way of Christian pilgrims visiting the sacred places, and the fateful year 1000 had come and gone before the Christian world saw any call to action. The fact that the earth continued to exist after the thousand years of the Christian era had passed brought to Europe a new outlook. Most men had believed that the world would then come to an end, and when the end did not come a feeling of greater stability arose. Reports now began to come from Palestine of cruelties committed on the pilgrims by the Mohammedans. The two factors combined to impress on Christendom the appeal of Peter the Hermit, and started that confusion of religious enthusiasm, wild adventure, sordid greed, and wasted powers which is named the Crusades.

The Crusades themselves, their few and brilliant successes and their constant ghastly failure, are

beside our subject. They produced in the course of their history many strange events, of which not the least remarkable was the curious idea of applying the monastic theory to the trade of war. The notion of a Holy War between the soldiers of Christ and the infidel readily suggested that these warriors fulfilled a ministry of the Church, in its degree parallel to that of the clergy ; with the comparison came this novel application of the monastic ideal. If the war of the Cross was a mission of the Church, the warriors might naturally form a religious Order, similar to the existing Orders, save only that the weapons of their warfare should be carnal. On these premisses in 1119 the Order of Templars was founded with Hugh de Payens at the head of eight knights. Their original purpose was defined as the maintenance of safe passage for pilgrims along the roads of Palestine, and the monastic source of their ideal was made plain by the triple vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience, by which all the brethren were bound. Growing rapidly in numbers, in 1128 they received the sanction of the Church, with a rule drawn up by the great St. Bernard himself. They had already acquired as a place of residence the convent and church of the Temple on Mount Moriah at Jerusalem, from which their name was derived.

Though monasticism had originally sought communion with spiritual things by solitary retreat from the world, even in the patristic age it had been modified into a communistic life of men bound by the triple vow. On this triple vow and on this

communistic life the Templars' Rule was based. Such of the details of the monastic routine as could be adapted to the special conditions of the Order were followed. Regular attendance at the offices of the Church was compulsory but not strictly enforced; those who had been on night duty, for instance, were exempted from attendance at matins. That the ideal of service should be sternly upheld, all sport, with the exception of lion hunting within the borders of Palestine, was prohibited. The single exception was due to the usefulness of that pursuit and the stimulus to courage given by its danger. Communication with family connections or relatives was only allowed by special permission of the Grand Master. This officer, the absolute head of the whole society, was elected by Chapter of all the brethren, and his will was supreme. By consent of the Chapter, the rules could at any time be supplemented by private enactments which were made known only to those whom they might directly concern. A marked element of secrecy was thus bound up in the scheme of the Order. The rules were interpreted by the officers, often with curious applications; members were warned at their admission that they must keep so strictly from women that they must never enter a house where a woman was in child-bed, they must never be present at the baptism of an infant or the churching of a woman, lest (it may be assumed) they should crave for family life. Obedience to the Grand Master was put to the novice as a kind of obedience to God Himself, and no order of the Grand Master

might be questioned, however outrageous it seemed ; the Grand Master even assumed the right to pronounce in Chapter a formula of Absolution, a practice which in the subsequent attack on the Order was made to appear as a blasphemous assumption of the priestly office.[1]

There were three grades of membership. At the head were the knights, the actual fighting force, all of whom belonged to noble families ; secondly there were clerks who acted as chaplains, and thirdly the most numerous body, serving brethren, made up of poorer men of common birth, were artificers, millers, farmers, and attendants, performing every type of work and carrying out the many activities of the Order under the management of the knights. All three classes took the same vows and wore a distinctive dress, the knights a mantle of white with a red cross, the others a mantle of black with the same red cross. They wore their hair cut close and a short beard that, according to their own description, they might be able *regarder devant et derrière.* In the seal of the Order, two knights seated on one horse, Matthew Paris sees a symbol of their poverty. *Adeo pauperes erant ut unum tantum equum haberent communem.* They carried the black and white standard called Beauséant, the Piebald, with the motto *Non nobis Domine.*

Their original house was in Jerusalem, and the Grand Master was never permitted to reside outside of Palestine. But it was not long before the zeal of Christendom endowed them with houses and

[1] H. de Curzon, *La Règle du Temple.* Paris, 1886.

lands in every country of Europe, and the numbers of Templar houses rivalled those of any religious Order. Their work and devotion stirred the imagination and touched the emotions of the civilized world. Even their Moslem enemies paid them respect ; the Arabian historian, I'bn Alatsyr, speaks of the high regard for the word of a Templar felt by Saladin and all Moslems, though all other Christians they could not but distrust. Another Arab chronicler notices with something like awe the fact that of six hundred Templars captured by Bendocdar and offered their lives on condition of becoming Moslems, only one apostatized, while the rest went willingly to death. Over and over again in the desperate fighting of the Crusades the Templars fell to a man ; their rules forbade ransom and they scorned the freedom their enemies offered. They were the only properly trained soldiers in the Crusading armies, and it was they alone who saved from worse failure the undisciplined rabble of which the volunteer armies consisted. They well deserved the praise of Pope Hadrian IV, who called them the " new Maccabees, far-famed and valiant champions of the Lord." Not only in Palestine, but against the Tartars in Hungary and against the Moors in Spain they did good work for the cause for which they stood.[1]

Nor was war against the infidel their only service to Europe. During the greater part of the time

[1] This preliminary survey depends in the main on Addison, Finke, and Lea. The actual trials are based on the original documents, and there authorities are cited.

the Order existed its members were the principal financial agents of the European princes. The excellence of their fortresses gave them ideal strong rooms, where the wealthy deposited their treasures for security. Their high standard of honour encouraged all who had valuables to send from one place to another to make the Templars their convoy. And with their honourable position in all countries they became the normal agents for raising loans and conducting every kind of financial negotiation for the various Governments of the time. In England they were the guardians of the Royal treasure in the Tower. They were bankers for Henry III, as is shown by a record ordering them to make a payment of ten thousand marks to the Emperor at Constantinople on behalf of the King. It was through them that Philip the Fair borrowed the money for his daughter's dowry on her marriage with Edward II ; and in 1146 they had been able to accommodate King Louis with a considerable loan. It must not, however, be hastily assumed that these advances were made from the actual capital of the Templars themselves. It is more probable that they were only brokers, a position which their international organization made extremely easy for them.[1]

At the same time their business qualities were not an unmixed blessing. Financiers are often as a class unpopular. The independence which this work and other privileges gave the Templars roused jealousy outside the Order and probably undermined

[1] For their financial operations, see Delisle, L., in *Mem. de l'Académie des Inscr.*, xxxiii (ii). Paris, 1889.

the ideals of the members themselves. As churchmen they were by their constitution exempt under the feudal system from all civil obligations, while Pope after Pope relieved them from the more important ecclesiastical demands. In 1271 Gregory X exempted them from the payment of tenths and contributions to the Holy War, so that they escaped practically all taxation, both of Church and State. Honorius III in 1216 had exempted their houses from episcopal interdict, thus enabling them at any time to defy the penalties imposed upon their neighbours. When every church bell in a district hung silent, when the dead were buried without mass or prayer, when no child could be baptized and no marriage solemnized, when the whole district lay under the curse of God, the Temple churches were open, and if the Templars were so minded, they might extend their privilege to anyone whom they chose to describe as a Temple servant or a worker on Temple lands. Innocent III absolved the priests of the Order from all obedience to their own bishops, making them directly subject to the Pope alone, and the Order itself withdrew its houses in the East from any allegiance they might owe to their proper head, the Patriarch of Jerusalem. In the pursuit of their special work of war with the infidel, the Templars were allowed to make private and separate treaties at their own will and without reference to any commander of the Crusading armies.

No body of men could have supported these privileges without unpopularity; and it would

have been a miracle if they could have preserved the simplicity and beauty of their ideals. As a matter of history they did not preserve them. And while the adverse opinions of the average ecclesiastical chronicler, like William of Tyre or Matthew Paris, must have been deeply coloured by the prejudice that rises with every mention of the Order, at the same time the Pope himself, who was always their natural champion, was too often driven to remonstrance and rebuke. The right to make separate treaties opened the way to an easy accusation of treachery. Crusaders arriving in Palestine, as they always did, unexpectedly and at irregular intervals, and finding a truce in operation, in their disappointment blamed the Templars. William of Beaujeu, the Grand Master, who fell at Acre in 1291, was accused of friendship with the Sultan, an accusation which persisted so strongly that it may have had some truth behind it. Matthew Paris repeats many similar accusations. He reports that the Emperor Frederick accused the Templars of entertaining the Sultans and allowing them to celebrate their worship in the Temple houses. In 1147 he says that they had deliberately prevented the capture of Damascus; that in 1229 they had betrayed Frederick II; that in 1250 they had betrayed St. Louis. Whether there is any truth in these reports or not, the Templars certainly in 1201 diverted their forces to carry on war against the Christian King of Armenia, and their notorious quarrels with the Hospitallers actually became open war between 1241 and 1243. It is not

unlikely that constant intercourse with the Mohammedans gave them an insight into the character of their enemies that the casual Crusaders who spent no more than a few months in the East could never gain ; they doubtless learnt to understand something of the Moslem ideal, while they could not but admire the courage and fighting qualities of the soldiers against whom they were matched. Disgusted with the futility of the spirit in which they were supported by Europe, Templars would make rash statements, which enemies turned to their undoing. There was, for example, the English knight with his characteristically English remark : "The creed of the paynim is as good as ours," or the Burgundian who declared more truculently, "It is of no consequence to deny Christ ; they deny Him a hundred times in our country *pour une puce*."

Such accusations may be baseless, but the insolence and greed of the Templars has a stronger foundation. The chroniclers are unanimous. James of Vitry tells them : "You profess to have no individual property, but in common you wish to have everything." William of Tyre defines their ambition as the desire to rival the wealth of monarchs. He goes so far as to accuse them of delivering Nazireddin to his enemies for sixty thousand gold florins, though he was on the point of becoming a Christian. Matthew Paris, who is consistently hostile to the Order, does not hesitate to say that they prolonged the wars with the Saracens merely to have a pretext for raising more money. They were even charged with speculating in coin, and the

Pope himself wrote in 1208 that "they make a cloak of religion for worldly gain."

This Pope (Innocent III), who was otherwise the friend of the Order, writes in the severest language of the abuses which the privileges of the Order had created: "Following the doctrine of devils, they mark the sign of the Crucified on every kind of vagabond . . . they think nothing of adding sin to sin like a long rope, claiming that whosoever have appealed to their brotherhood by a yearly contribution of two or three shillings cannot be lawfully deprived of the burial office of the Church even though they may be under interdict." In 1223 the Bull *De Insolentia Templariorum reprimenda* presses the case of abused privileges against the English Templars. They usurped domains by putting their crosses on houses which did not belong to them; they prevented customary dues being paid to the Crown; they disregarded the customs of the King's manors and involved the King's officers in vexatious lawsuits. It was not merely that they pleaded their privileges or refused to pay tithes and first-fruits. They perpetrated indefensible acts of insolence. When in 1192 Cyprus came into their hands by purchase from Richard Cœur de Lion, they misruled the island so flagrantly by imposing taxes and ill-treating the natives, that they were compelled to relinquish their purchase to Guy de Lusignan. They marched with the English army against the Scots, and after the loss of Palestine they ravaged the Latin princes of Morea at the bidding of Charles of Valois, acts of

interference in domestic politics that openly disregarded their mission. They defied the Pope himself on occasion.[1] Casual references give accidental evidence of their disrepute. The following is a significant example.

In the last quarter of the thirteenth century a piece of land at Esperstoun in Midlothian was held by one Robert the Scot. On his death it fell to his daughter Christiana. She married William Simple, son of Geoffrey, and to him bore three sons, Richard, William, and Brounin. William Simple the husband being, as the charter says, "more given to ease than to labour," made over his life interest in his wife's property to the Templars at Balantrodach. He lived in their Preceptory as a corrodian, apart from his wife, while she and her children existed on a bare maintenance in a house granted to her on her own property. On the husband's death the Master of the Temple claimed the property (though the husband could mortgage only his life interest) and ordered her to leave the house she occupied. She refused. A body of Templars entered the house and dragged her to the door. She clung to the top of the doorway so that they could not pull her away, whereupon one of the Templars drew a knife and lopped off one of her fingers and threw her out screaming. She approached Edward I of England (June 5, 1296), then in Scotland, and by him was restored. But on the resumption of the war the worthy Master of the Temple, Brian le Jay (a name often quoted

[1] E.g. in the excommunication of Etienne Sisi in 1263.

at the Trial of the Order), appeared on the scene in command of a body of Welsh mercenaries in the pay of the English. He took forcible possession of the property again. Four days before the battle of Falkirk, Richard Simple, now the heir, interviewed the Master, who spoke to him fairly and invited him to act as guide to his army. While acting as guide, he was assassinated by the Welsh mercenaries in Rosebery wood. The Templars kept possession of the land until their downfall, when the King's Chancery decided that it really belonged to the Simples.[1]

Finally, there was a general suspicion that the private life of the Templars would not bear investigation. When the continuator of William of Tyre attributes the frightful defeat at Tiberias in 1187 to the "filth, luxury, and adultery" that had prevailed in Jerusalem, it is the Templars he has in mind. It was boasted openly by members of the Order that any unwelcome visitors found in their Chapter meetings would at once be killed. Their rule demanded absolute secrecy, and in fact the 69th section makes a double secrecy possible by allowing an inner circle within the Order itself. For the Grand Master is permitted to summon for council not the whole body of members but those he judges circumspect. This may have become generally known, while the fact that all admissions took place at a night Chapter was always common knowledge: so that it is possible that these two precautions were sufficient to give cause for ground-

[1] Charter printed in *Scottish Hist. Rev.*, v, pp. 13–25.

less suspicions. On the other hand, no sound argument can be founded on the secrecy of the rule, for rumour was equally busy with the Hospitallers who had no secret rites whatever. There are two survivals in popular language which show the common opinion of the Order. The French had (and perhaps still have) a proverbial saying, "To drink like a Templar," and the German word "Tempelhaus" is used to mean a "brothel." Too great significance, however, need not be attached to these casual expressions of popular suspicion; a privileged class, even in the Middle Ages, was probably the butt for unjustified insinuations. The principal facts, the greed and insolence of the Order, the slackening of its ideals and its purpose, needed little argument when the final failure of the Crusades called for a decision on the Order's future.

The Crusades came to an end with the failure and death of St. Louis in 1270; Jerusalem was finally destroyed in 1291 and the Christians expelled from the whole of Palestine. The Templars, who to the last had fought with unfailing courage, sent their treasures to Cyprus, where the last Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, was elected in 1297. They had left behind the greater part of their brethren dead on the field of honour. But besides the survivors in Cyprus, there were considerable numbers of Templars in the various houses of the Order throughout Europe. The actual number in all Europe at the beginning of the fourteenth century may be estimated at 15,000, of whom at

least one-third were at the time in France. Of this total not more than one-tenth were knights, the remaining nine-tenths being serving brothers, with a few chaplains. This proportion is supported in all the enumerations of brethren arrested in the various districts. Of sixty Templars seized in Beaucaire in 1307, five were knights, one was a priest, and the other fifty-four were servitors. Thirty-three prisoners in Château d'Alais in 1310 comprised four knights, one priest, and twenty-eight servitors. The wealth of the Order was considerable, but nothing like as great as popular report and summary historians would make it. In extent of property they were probably far less wealthy than the Hospitallers. For in 1244 they had only nine thousand manors to the Hospitallers' nineteen thousand. On the other hand, the Templars administered their property well, they were themselves persons of capacity, and they were probably far more formidable as an organized society than either their numbers or wealth might imply. Wise men had long ago guessed at the possible danger this efficient and determined society might become. The problem of their existence had been discussed at the Council of Lyons in 1245, and the possibility of a union of Templars and Hospitallers had been mooted. Popes Nicholas IV and Boniface VIII had had the same thought. And when the critical time came a legist of Constance, Peter Dubois, addressed a statement to Edward I of England *De recuperatione Terræ Sanctæ* (1307). His plan was intended to solve the problem of the military

Orders as much as the problem of the Holy Land. He proposed the amalgamation of the two Orders of Templars and Hospitallers and the administration of their funds by the Pope. The residence of the new combined Order should be confined strictly to the East, and all their property in the West should be turned into schools of Oriental studies and training camps for future Crusaders.

It is plain that the Templars were a source of uneasiness to the rulers of Church and State in Europe. In the British Islands and in the German States they were not numerous, and were apparently in close relation with the ruling princes. In Castile and Portugal they were regarded as a useful bulwark against the Moors, as they were against the Tartars on the eastern boundary of the Empire in Hungary. In Aragon, as the attempt at their arrest showed, King James was afraid of them, and they openly defended themselves with the sword. In some of the Italian States they were more popular than in others. But in France, where their numbers were far the largest, Philip the Fair, as all his subsequent actions show, was determined on the suppression of the Order. There are many reasons for sympathizing with the feelings of Philip. A body of professional soldiers with a powerful international organization, with the purpose of their mission no longer capable of fulfilment, with no special allegiance to the country in which they were living, with unusual financial resources at their command, if not in their possession, and with the Templars'

record of daring and insolence behind them, such a body could not but menace the stability of Europe, and above all the stability of the French State. The method by which Philip secured the downfall of the Order has discreditable features, but his policy in itself is no more than a testimony to his foresight and statesmanship, and to his determination to assert the secular State against the dominant authority of the Church.

III

THE chroniclers have sought all kinds of obscure motives for the King's action. Questions of finance enter into most of the explanations.[1] The *Gestes des Chyprois* and the *Chronicle of Amadi* tell a story of a quarrel of Jacques de Molay with Philip over a member of the Order who had been expelled by de Molay for lending money to the King. The chronicler of Edward II, Geoffrey le Baker, finds the financial trouble in the dowry of Isabella, Philip's daughter, a transaction which the Templars had negotiated and, in the opinion of the King, had handled dishonestly and to their own advantage. One of the correspondents of the King of Aragon couples a merely general accusation of covetousness, in which he includes the Pope, with a more particular charge that the King had wished to unite the Templars and the Hospitallers into a single Order under his own supervision, a proposal which the Templars had rejected.[2] Baluzius and the *Chronicle of Asti* make wilder suggestions, the former that a feud had arisen between the Order and Philip because that monarch had encouraged the King of Majorca in 1290 to occupy the Templars' house at Elne, while the latter makes the still wilder conjecture, which no other evidence supports, that William Nogaret was alone responsible for the King's atti-

[1] Lizerand, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
[2] Ep. of Christian Spinola, in Finke, ii, 51.

tude, and Nogaret had a private grievance against the Templars because his father had been burned at the stake as a heretic at their instigation. The only really plausible view is that put forward by De Peyrac, abbé of Moissiac, to the effect that the Templars had conspired against Philip. The truth possibly lies behind this statement. It was not that they had conspired, but that the King feared the existence of this powerful military organization. Philip had inherited a definite political ideal —the consolidation of the French monarchy. That ideal involved first the development of the modern narrow conception of nationality, and secondly the suppression of any system that challenged the supremacy of the Crown. The Templar organization plainly menaced both elements of the royal policy. By its very constitution it was international, and its privileges made independence of the secular Government inevitable in its working. Philip saw, therefore, in the Templars an obstacle to a definite policy. Indirectly Philip's objective was the Church.

When or how Philip came to his conclusion is unknown, but it is certain that in the early years of the fourteenth century he had decided that the Templars must cease to exist as a society. It would be eminently unjust to Philip, who was from all accounts a man of high moral ideals, to assume that he hatched a treacherous plot to overthrow the Order. From the general currents of opinion at the time, and from casual notices like that in Christian Spinola's letter to James of Aragon, it is probable that Philip sought to gain his purpose

by the peaceful methods of transforming the ideals and work of the Order, of putting its members under civil control, and of gradually reducing the range of their ecclesiastical privileges. This project the Templars themselves refused so emphatically that the plan could be prosecuted no further.

By 1305 Philip and the Pope were in correspondence on the subject of the Templars. In 1306 the Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, was summoned from Cyprus by the Pope.[1] No definite plan against the Order was then afoot, for the overtures for reconstruction were only finally rejected by the Grand Master after his return from the East. A plan, however, was soon available. A renegade knight, Esquiu de Florian, appeared on the scene with an amazing medley of accusations against the Order. It is tempting to assume that this man was merely an informer in the pay of Nogaret or some other tool of the King of France. Tempting as a theory, this will scarcely stand criticism. For Esquiu made his first proposals, not to Philip but to James, King of Aragon. Dr. Finke has discovered in the Barcelona Archives, a letter which was written by Esquiu at a later date with reference to his original proposal.

To the most serene and mighty prince and dearest lord, the lord James, by the grace of God illustrious king of the Aragons, Valencia, Sardinia and Corsica, count of Barcelona faithful respect and the devotion of eternal service from his faithful Esquiu de Floyran in the household of the illustrious sovereign lord of France. Be it plain to your majesty that

[1] Reg. Clem. V, i, 190. Lizerand, *Le Dossier*, pp. 2 *sqq.*

I am he who revealed the affair of the Templars to the sovereign lord of France, and know, sir, that you were the first prince in the whole world to whom I originally revealed their affairs at Lerida in the presence of brother Martin Datecha your confessor. Whereupon, sir, as you willed not to lay full confidence in my words at that hour, I had resort to the sovereign lord of France who tested the thing and found it as clear as the sun at least in his own kingdom, so that the Pope has been informed of the affair in full as well as the other princes, namely the king of Germany, the king of England, king Charles,[1] and other princes. Wherefore, sir, know that in pursuance of the fact that the case has been made clear to the king of France, I have sent my letters of credit for conveyance to you by Master Peter Mercator, a secretary of our illustrious lord the king of France, who will declare the whole affair to you on my behalf. Moreover, sir, you must know that when I left you, you arranged with me that once the affair was discovered to be true we should send the evidence to you. Wherefore, sir, I have desired to obey your commands . . . (Here follows a short statement of the errors to which the Templars confessed.) . . . You must remember, sir, that on my withdrawal from your chamber at Lerida, you promised me that if the affair of the Templars was discovered to be true, you would give me out of their property a thousand pounds in rents and three thousand pounds in money. Wherefore since the truth has been discovered, when opportunity arises, deign to remember this . . ." [2]

If this renegade Templar, who apparently at one time held high office in the Order, being Prior of Montfaucon, was merely a paid agent of Nogaret's,

[1] I.e. of Sicily.

[2] Finke, *op. cit.*, ii, 83. The chronology is uncertain. It is inferred from the presence of the king at Lerida that Esquiu's interview took place early in 1305. What interval elapsed before he approached Philip is unknown, probably it was shorter rather than longer. Cf. Finke, i, p. 111.

he went about his work with an unusual subtlety. There is, in any case, a good deal of blundering in the reports of Esquiu's action, for many historians give him a companion with the curious name of Noffodei. Dr. Finke has rescued the real name of this Italian, Arnolfo Deghi, but it is improbable that he had anything to do with the Templars, unless he introduced Esquiu to Nogaret. Deghi certainly was a creature of the French Government ; it was he who appeared with information accusing Guichard, Bishop of Troyes, of sorcery in 1300 ; and eventually he ended his inglorious career on the gallows for what the chroniclers describe vaguely as "a crime," but there is no sound evidence of his appearance against the Templars.[1]

The information with which Esquiu de Florian was armed sounds to modern minds a grotesque as well as an improbable indictment. Familiarity with the history of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, however, will show that many of the charges brought against the Templars were a commonplace of the period levelled at persons in every rank of society. The general heads of Esquiu's accusation were these : from his inner experience of the Order he had reason to know— (1) That the Templars put their Order before every moral principle and took oath to defend it and enrich it, whether by right or by wrong ; (2) that they kept up a secret correspondence with the Moslems ; (3) that novices on admission were required to spit on the cross, to renounce Christ,

[1] Lizerand, *op. cit.*, p. 84 Finke, i, p. 113.

and to take part in a mock ceremonial; (4) that any who attempted to expose the Order were secretly murdered; (5) that the brethren despised the sacraments of the Church, omitted the words of consecration in the Canon of the Mass, worshipped idols, notably a skull and an image called Baphomet; (6) that they were addicted to immorality; (7) that they had betrayed the Holy Land; and (8) that they worshipped the devil, usually in the form of a cat.[1]

Philip of France had no wish to attack any Templar as an individual: his aim was to secure the destruction of the Order. For this reason it was essential that he should have the co-operation of the Pope. The Templars were an ecclesiastical society outside the reach of the civil courts, and they were spread over the whole of Europe. The Pope alone could command the obedience of all the European princes, and the Pope alone could enforce the law in the face of the ecclesiastical position of the Order. Hence Philip's anxiety and efforts to secure the Pope's co-operation. That was not difficult to do, for the Pope was Clement V, a Frenchman raised to the Papacy by the act of the King, resident in France until 1309, and eventually transferring the Papal chair only to Avignon on the borders of French territory. He was therefore in every way a creature of the King's. But even so, he did not at once consent. Thanks to the information derived from Esquiu, Philip had the necessary material; all was ready for action, but

[1] Finke, ii, 83.

the Pope still held back. He was a weak man, sincere as a churchman, and probably really afraid from spiritual motives to attack a religious Order. He appears to have held out until August 1307: then, being no longer able to delay in the face of the accusations in the hands of the King, he consented to hold an inquiry into the conduct of the Order. By this time the King had decided to arrest the Templars himself, a course probably suggested by William Nogaret, the King's confidential adviser, an honest, determined, and ruthless example of the French anti-clerical temperament. Nogaret was to act, having behind him the support of the Inquisition, which Langlois has described as being no longer an instrument to suppress heresy, but an engine to act against the enemies of the Crown.[1] It was this readiness of the Inquisition to work under the direction of the King of France that alone made action against the Templars possible.

The actual arrest took place on the night of October 13, 1307. Every Templar within the French borders was thrown into prison, with the exception of an inconsiderable number who had taken refuge in flight. The most conspicuous and the most important of the fugitives was Gerard de Villars, who figures frequently in the subsequent evidence. He not only fled but carried with him forty brethren, whom he armed for defence.[2] The intention of the Government, therefore, can scarcely

[1] Lavisse, *Hist. de France*, vol. iii, pt. 2, pp. 174 *sqq.* Finke, ii, p. 44. *Ibid.*, i, p. 149.

[2] List of fugitives given in a document printed by Finke, ii, 74.

have been kept entirely secret, but the Templars trusted, as they trusted to the end, in the power of the Church and the friendship of the Pope. A large number of the arrested brethren were examined immediately with the application of torture by the King's officers.[1] This was, strictly speaking, an infringement of the ecclesiastical rights of religious persons, but Nogaret knew the subservient Inquisitors would raise no difficulty and he was determined to have some pleas of guilty as a starting-point for his case. For it was a principle of the procedure of the Inquisition that a plea of guilty should come from the accused, and it is that fact that explains the unceasing efforts to extort confessions from the Templars. Some confessions were made in this preliminary examination, and on October 15th, two days after the arrest, Nogaret, always anxious to enlist public support, made a grandiloquent proclamation to the people of Paris denouncing the Order. To safeguard his action further, Nogaret appealed to the Faculty of Theology in the University of Paris to state whether civil officers were competent to take the preliminary action he had taken : he received the satisfactory reply that they were competent, provided they intended to hand their prisoners to the Church for sentence. Nogaret conducted his case throughout with care and decision. On October 19th, the examination was opened before William Imbert, Grand Inquisitor of France.[2] Basing his questions on the information derived from Esquiu de Florian and the confessions

[1] Lizerand, p. 101.

[2] Michelet, *Procès*, ii, 276 *sqq*.

obtained by the King's officers, he examined 138 Templars on five points: (1) Renunciation of Christ and spitting on the cross; (2) mockery in the ceremonies of admission; (3) the worship of idols; (4) permission given to members for immorality; (5) omissions in the Canon of the Mass. A large number of confessions were drawn both from the members examined at Paris and from others out of about a hundred examined in other French towns. On October 25th and 26th, the Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, and the other principal officers of the Order were examined and confessed to some of the charges, the Doctors and scholars of the University of Paris being present at some stage of their examination. Sufficient material was now available to make a strong case for the Pope, and the Pope might at this stage have carried out the King's plan and dissolved the Order. Unfortunately for the Order, the Pope had taken fright. Apparently he thought it was his duty to stand by the Order; on October 27th he wrote to Philip regretting what had been done and declaring that Papal rights were infringed by the act of the Inquisitor. By November 17th, however, he had changed his mind and asked Philip to proceed. The reason of this change is unknown, but the French bishops supported the King, and the unhappy Pope must have reached that stage of indecision when any action seems irrational. On the 22nd of the same month, no doubt under pressure, the Pope issued the Bull *Pastoralis præeminentiæ* informing all the princes of Europe of the result

of the examination of the French Templars, and calling on them to arrest and examine all members of the Order in their territories. Articles of examination were attached to the Bull.

At this point there is a blank of three months for which no documents are available. The next known incident occurred in February 1308, when one of the prisoners escaped, and it looks as if the Pope had lapsed into inaction, for he is again pressed to go forward. The King's claim at this period is given in an undated document probably from the hand of Nogaret. It is an *ex-parte* statement, but fairly represents the King's point of view The position stands as follows, says Nogaret (if Nogaret be the author): the Grand Master first confessed his guilt, then pleaded that this confession had been extorted by force, and then admitted that his original confession was true. Canon law, civil law, and common sense agree that a man cannot refute his own public confession. The Grand Master confessed his own errors to the Inquisitor in the presence of several persons, and several days later repeated it before the same Inquisitor, a large number of religious, and the University of Paris, when he also admitted the charges against the Order as a whole. Two months later he still held to his original confession, and with his own mouth asked that he might be submitted to torture that the other members of the Order might not accuse him of treachery to them. His evil influence in the Order is demonstrated by other confessions, and his punishment is necessary to

satisfy public opinion. The same is true of Hugh de Peraud, Grand Preceptor of the Order in France. As regards the Order as a whole, it is corrupt in its very substance, and no plea of the vows of the members can hold, since a contract for an evil purpose is in law *ipso facto* held not to be binding, As to the defence of the Order, there is no place for defence. There is no question of a trial of the members. We are calling on the Pope to free the Church from a reproach and a scandal. The King of France is not the accuser of the Order ; he is the defender of the Faith. But if any doubts are entertained—which in face of the confessions there should not be—it is open to the Church to make any necessary inquiry. If the principle of a defence be admitted, it amounts to admitting that the crimes of the Order can be justified. Were the Nestorians or any other heretics asked to defend themselves? The Church is now called upon, not to sit in judgment, but to act in her administrative function for the well-being of society (*non per modum iudicii sed per modum provisionis*). The method of action is paralleled by that of Gregory X at the Council of Lyons, when he reduced the number of religious Orders *per provisionem* and no suggestion of a defence was made. As to the question whether there may not be a basis for defence and reconstruction in the fact that some few members may be absolutely innocent, it is difficult to believe that there can be any such. The guilt of the principal officers damns the whole organization ; no members could remain in the Order without

suspicion and a risk to other souls. Such a solution could serve no good purpose and would give ground for scandal, which at all costs should be avoided.[1]

Armed with some such statement of his case, and further strengthened by a resolution condemning the Order passed by a national assembly, held at Tours on May 1st, Philip at last went in person to meet the Pope and compel him to take action. The meeting took place at Poitiers, where a Papal consistory was held in the royal palace on May 29th. A long report of the Consistory was sent by John of Burgundy to the King of Aragon.[2] William de Plaisians, another member of the French Court circle of the type of Nogaret, spoke in support of the King, incidentally meeting the charge that avarice was the motive of his actions. "He is certainly not impelled by greed, for he has enough, more in fact than any Christian prince. Moreover, he has deposited the goods of the Templars with certain trustworthy persons, not officials of his own, who, after making allowance for expenses, will husband the property that it may be spent in the maintenance of the highways of the Holy Land for which it was given." He went on to state that the Grand Master had *without torture* confessed his own crimes and those of the Order, as many other brethren had done. Among other facts he declared that in Spain the members of the Order had become converts to the Saracens and had attacked the kingdom of Aragon, the latter statement being indeed true, though the former was only a rhetorical figure.

[1] Finke, ii, 101 *sqq.* [2] *Ibid.*, 135 *sqq.*

He concluded by urging on the Pope the necessity for immediate action. Others followed in a similar strain. The Pope merely gave an indefinite answer to the effect that if the Order was really guilty, he would loathe it from his soul.

It may be assumed that Philip remonstrated privately with the Pope, for a second Consistory on June 14th was more satisfactory to the King. The Pope now undertook to interrogate a number of Templars who should be sent to him for the purpose. On June 27th the members of the Order were placed in the Pope's hands and selected cases, some seventy in number, were examined by the Pope and his deputies. They all confessed to some points of the charges, and on July 10th were publicly reconciled to the Church, as John of Burgundy again reports to the King of Aragon.[1] Even though these cases were specially selected, as they probably were, as likely to impress the Pope, and however little the Pope might regard their confessions as spontaneous, he could no longer refuse to take action against the Order. He had already promised to leave the final decision to a Council of the Church, which was to meet at Vienne on October 10, 1310. On August 12, 1308, Clement therefore issued the Bull *Faciens misericordiam*, in which he again called upon all Christian princes to make examination of all Templars in their domains on a series of scheduled charges. At the same time, a commission of inquiry was appointed to take evidence from the French Templars and to report to the Council, with the

[1] Finke, ii, 152–3.

object of stating a case not against the individual members but against the Order. On this Commission the Pope may have been under the impression that he was nominating persons favourable to the Order, but they were weak men overawed by the King, and several of them withdrew from the Commission or even made no pretence of attending its meetings. The original Commission consisted of Gilles de Aycelin, Archbishop of Narbonne, President, the Bishops of Mende, Bayeux, and Limoges, the Archdeacons of Rouen (a Papal Notary), Trent and Maguelonne, and the Provost of Aix. The Archbishop, the Bishop of Bayeux, and the Provost attended practically no meetings of the Commission.[1] Simultaneously episcopal courts were to pursue their inquiries with the assistance of the Inquisitors.

[1] Michelet, *Procès*, i, 100, *et passim*.

IV

THE purpose of Philip (and of the Pope, so far as he responded to Philip's demands) was definite. It was to secure such a weight of evidence against the Order, supplied by the members themselves, that no course would be open but to dissolve the Order and confiscate its property. This aim opened no attack on individuals, for individually the Templars were no danger. In the sequel many Templars were burnt at the stake, but that ghastly incident was an unforeseen side-issue to which Philip was brought by the vacillation of the Pope and the obstinacy of the Order itself. Philip had hoped that, in face of the evidence he had already collected, there would be no resistance ; he must at least be absolved from the charge of plotting in cold blood the murder of these men. His intention throughout was to secure his purpose by peaceful means.

A schedule of heads of inquiry was drawn up and attached to the Papal Bull. This schedule was based on the confessions extorted by means of the original revelations of Esquiu de Florian. We have already noticed that the procedure of the Inquisition required confession from its prisoners ; the evidence of external witnesses, however good, was not sufficient, and this feature, more or less common to all mediæval courts, makes modern theories of evidence largely inapplicable. The heads of examination were expressed in a form to

cover the Order rather than individual members; that explains both the tautology of the indictment and many of the apparently irrelevant questions put to the witnesses. As much, therefore, will probably be learnt of the meaning of the accusation by analysing the charges as by analysing the evidence. There were 87 (or as set out for the Papal Commission 127) articles of inquiry, expanded from the nine or ten principal charges. These articles ran as follows:

Articles 1–8.—The members of the Order renounced Christ, or the Crucified, or Jesus, sometimes God, or the Blessed Virgin, or all the saints of God. This they did at their admission, or after their admission, and on divers occasions. They, or some of them, stated that Christ, the Crucified, or Jesus was not the Redeemer, or that He died for His own sins, or that in Jesus there was no hope of salvation.

9–13.—The members of the said Order spit on or near a cross or crucifix; when ordered, they stamped on the cross. This they did habitually. Especially they did so on Good Friday, on which day also *super crucem mingebant*, making others also do the same. This was done openly in the presence of other members.

14 and 15.—They worshipped a cat, and did so in contempt of the Christian religion.

16–19.—They, or some of them, or the majority of them, did not believe in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Nor did they believe in the other Sacraments.

20–23.—The priests of the Order omitted the words *Hoc est corpus meum* in the Canon of the Mass, either some of them, or the majority, and this practice was enjoined upon them at their admission to the Order.

24–29.—The members believed that the Grand Master could give them absolution; also the Visitor, and the

Preceptors. These officers, or some of them, habitually did pronounce the absolution, and the Grand Master had admitted this before his arrest in the presence of many.

30–33.—At the admission of a candidate kisses were exchanged, not only on the lips, but *in umbilico seu in ventre nudo et in ano seu spina dorsi*; sometimes *in umbilico* alone, or *in spina dorsi* alone, or *in virga virili*.

34–35.—At the admission candidates were required to swear they would never leave the Order. They were regarded as full members immediately they were admitted.

36–39.—Admission ceremonies were clandestine; no one was present but the members. This secrecy had long ago aroused suspicion against the Order and was a topic of common conversation.

40–45.—Homosexual vice was enjoined upon candidates at their admission, either as permissible or desirable, both actively and passively committed, and was no sin. Most of the members, or some of them, practised it.

46–57.—In various provinces the Order had idols, namely heads with three faces, or a single face, or a human skull. The members worshipped these idols in their greater Chapters; they worshipped them as God, or as their Saviour; or some did this, or most of those present in the Chapter. They declared that the head was their Saviour, could make them rich, gave the Order all its wealth, made trees flower and the earth bear its fruit.

58–61.—Girdles which had touched the head of the said idols were worn by members of the Order outside their shirts or next their skin. At admission these girdles, or materials for making them, were delivered to the brethren. This ceremony was an act of worship paid to the idol, and the girdles were worn continually even at night.

62–68.—The brethren were admitted in this way, either usually or always. Those who refused the girdles were imprisoned or killed.

69–73.—Members made oath on the Sacrament not to reveal any of the secrets of the Order on penalty of death or prison. They dared not even speak to each other about the

ceremonies of their admission. Those caught doing so were punished with death or imprisonment.

74.—They were allowed to confess only to priests of the Order.

75 and 76.—That, knowing the crimes of the Order, they had omitted to correct them, or make them known to Holy Mother Church, and therefore all members had made themselves accomplices. The practices were of long standing, observed at home and abroad with the full knowledge of the officers of the Order.

77 and 78.—The rule of alms and hospitality was not observed. The members were under oath to enrich the Order by lawful or unlawful means, and in this pursuit no sin could be committed.

69–80.—The crimes of the Order were notorious, and scandal had been aroused in the minds of high personages, even princes and kings, and almost in the whole of Christendom. These crimes were public talk both inside the Order and outside.

81–87.—The high officers, the Grand Master, the Visitor, and the Grand Preceptors of Cyprus, Normandy, and Poitiers had confessed to the errors of the Order.[1]

This medley of charges may be classified in an abbreviated form which covers the whole indictment in the following ten heads: (1) Renunciation of Christ and insults to the Cross; (2) Worship of a cat and idolatry, including the adoration of a head and the alleged practice of touching this head with the girdles worn by the members; (3) Insults to the Sacraments; (4) Lay absolution and confession to persons not in holy orders; (5) Indecencies at the admission; (6) Secrecy; (7) Unnatural vice; (8) Claim of the Order to override in its own interests all principles of right and wrong; (9) Notoriety

[1] Michelet, vol. i, pp. 90 *sqq.*

of the Order and its enormities ; (10) Complicity of all members through their failure to denounce the Order.

Of these accusations several were the commonplaces of all mediæval criminal trials. Heresy and the abnormal went hand in hand, and it was an easy matter to bring against conspicuous persons charges of this description which it would be exceedingly hard to refute. By comparison, therefore, with parallel cases occurring earlier or contemporaneously, it is possible to argue that the case against the Templars was nothing but an accumulation of the stock charges brought against persons whose character it was desired to defame.

The seventh count in our summary, unnatural vice, was brought against nearly every mediæval heretic. In two of the other principal accusations of heresy in which Philip the Fair was involved—those of Guichard, Bishop of Troyes, and of Pope Boniface VIII—it was a leading charge.[1] As long ago as the twelfth century the Paulicians produced their offshoot, the Bogomils, who, as the Bulgarians, provided Western Europe with a synonym for a vice of which the heretics themselves were probably quite innocent.[2] The German word "*ketzer*," too, implies "sodomite" as well as "heretic." The connection was an obsession of the mediæval mind, which it is difficult to take seriously.[3]

[1] Lizerand, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

[2] Gieseler, *Eccles. Hist.* (Eng. tr.), vol. iii, pp. 494 *sqq.* Edinburgh, 1853.

[3] Essay in R. P. Knight, *Worship of Priapus*, p. 179. London, 1865.

The cat and the idolatry also recur. The Waldenses were credited with worshipping a cat, which they kissed *sub cauda*.[1] The Stedingers of Oldenburg, attacked by the Archbishop of Bremen in the thirteenth century, according to Baronius,[2] "in their orgies produced from a statue a black cat as large as a moderate-sized dog." In the later trials for witchcraft a black cat frequently appears. The mysterious head, or heads, are less obviously absurd. There is no *a priori* unlikelihood of such heads existing as relics, trophies, or mascots, perhaps collected from the Saracens as the name Baphomet suggests,[3] but probably without evil significance.

The incidents alleged at the admission ceremony are paralleled in the grotesque ritual of the Sabbat, where similar kisses were given to the President. In the case of the Stedingers, already noticed, Baronius reports that a toad which appeared at the initiation of new members was kissed on the posteriors. Among the Waldenses, in the case of a certain William Edeline, it was reported that he kissed *pudendam partem corporis* of a devil who appeared to him.[4] Clearly the whole thing is a parody of the kiss exchanged at the admission of a novice into a religious society. It is an example of the coarse humour which the Middle Ages loved. Insulting the cross and abusing the Sacraments were general allegations not infrequently made

[1] Wright and Hallowell, *Rel. Antiquæ*, i, 247.

[2] Baronius, xxi, 89.

[3] Fanciful explanations of this name are given; it need be no more than a variant of Mahomet.

[4] Anon., *de Orig. Carthus.* apud Martene, *Ampliss. Coll.*, vi, 55 *sqq.*

against heretics. Limborch, in his *History of the Inquisition*, refers to a sect connected with the Waldensian movement who stamped on the cross at their meetings,[1] while the twelfth-century reformer, Pierre de Bruys, denounced among other religious ceremonies the veneration of the cross, a fact which might easily come to be reported in the form of particular acts of insult to the cross. So, too, it was charged against Guichard, Bishop of Troyes, that he had spit on the Host while saying Mass, and against Boniface VIII that he had omitted part of the Canon, or otherwise made his Mass invalid.[2] In fact, irreverence to the Host lies at the very heart of one part of mediæval life and the Black Mass of the Sabbat makes such actions the great symbol of anti-Christian imagination.

It becomes very evident on an examination of the charges against the Templars that the most lurid of them are a collection of the usual accusations levelled at heretics. They are not charges of specific error but a medley of all the blasphemy and buffoonery that the childish imagination of the age could concoct.

If, therefore, these heads of accusation were to be removed from the schedule on the ground that they are so commonly brought against all kinds of persons that they give a *prima facie* suspicion of dishonesty to the case against the Order, the only definite charges would be the use of lay Absolution, secrecy in Chapter, and the claim of the Order that its interest should supersede all principles of right and wrong, with possibly the renunciation of

[1] Limborch, *Hist. Inquisit.*, iii, 21. [2] Lizerand, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

Christ and the mysterious head ; the two remaining points, the notoriety of the Order and the failure of its members to denounce its crimes, are only a corollary to the preceding charges. By such a reduction the accusation against the Templars looks less enormous but becomes more dangerous ; when we come to examine the evidence, it is these last charges that are met least satisfactorily. That the lay officers did pronounce a formula of absolution may be regarded as certain, though their action and their formula are capable of an interpretation that removes much of their offence against ecclesiastical rules. That the paramount claims of the Order superseded all principles of right and wrong can easily be a distortion or exaggeration of the obedience due from the brethren to their officers. The secrecy with which all proceedings in Chapter were surrounded is nowhere denied, is provided for by the Rule, and cannot by itself be construed as a crime. The two points which remain unrebutted and unexplained are the renunciation of Christ and the existence of the head, and less certainly the farcical performance connected with the admission of candidates. The evidence given by the members of the Order will have to be taken into account before we can venture any conclusion on these subjects. All that need be said now is that the presence of ludicrous or improbable elements in the schedule of charges does not justify an assumption that all the charges must be equally absurd. The mediæval mind liked to multiply accusations, for it had not the modern affection for a direct issue.

It held to the erroneous idea that a prosecutor ought to have a variety of accusations in hand lest the first should fail. This weakness might make us overlook the principal fact, namely, that if both or either of the two more substantial charges, that the members of the Order renounced Christ or that they aimed solely at the aggrandisement of their Order, if either of these can be proved, the Order stands condemned and its dissolution is justified, however little the method of that dissolution can be commended.[1]

[1] The comparison with similar charges has been stated in the light most favourable to the Templars. It is doubtful, however, if any of the charges can be dismissed on these *a priori* grounds. Within a century there began the trials for witchcraft, in which practically the whole series of counts reappears, not always without good grounds.

V

With the schedule of charges before them, the Papal Commission cited all Templars who wished to give evidence on behalf of the Order to appear before the Court on November 12, 1309.[1] Not a single Templar came. The situation is easily understood. The members of the Order did not know what the purpose of the Commission was: it could not be expected that after what had happened they were likely to walk into a trap. The King's party, however, having little doubt of the result, was anxious that the Commission should do its work. Accordingly they succeeded on November 22nd in producing from prison several Templars who had been persuaded to volunteer for the defence. Between November and March the proceedings of the Commission were dilatory. The Templars were again beginning to feel more sure of themselves, and as they felt surer some renounced the confessions they had already made. On November 26th, de Molay, the Grand Master, having offered to defend the Order, came before the Commission: on being reminded of his confession, which was read to him, he answered truculently that he was prepared to meet any member of the Commission in single combat, and hinted that the confession just read was nothing better than a forgery. Upon this William de Plaisians,

[1] Michelet, *Procès*, ii, pp. 101 *sqq.*

who was present in Court, advised him to reserve his defence, presumably with the intention of bringing him to a better judgment by private remonstrance. Three days later, on the 29th, the Grand Master returned, and, less arrogantly than before, protested that the Order was conspicuous for the good work it had done; he professed his own unswerving faith in the Holy Trinity and the Catholic Church. This time it was William Nogaret who rose in the Court and sardonically referred him to a passage in the *Chronicle of St. Denys*, in which Saladin attributed a defeat of the Templars to the divine judgment on their apostasy and vice.[1] By these incidents the futility of the Commission was already made apparent. The King's men were allowed to be present in the Court and intimidate the witnesses by interfering in the procedure. On the other hand, it seemed more than probable that, left to itself, the Commission would only succeed in getting the Templars to retract their confessions. The members of the Commission are commonly described as tools of the French King. The President certainly, from his previous record, may be regarded as hostile to the Templars, but it is more likely that the Commissioners as a whole were weak and incompetent rather than partial or unjust. De Molay adopted a grossly bullying tone, and it is only a fair plea that the King's officers were necessary to protect the Commissioners.

On March 25, 1310, the Templars taking courage, 556, most of whom had been brought

[1] Michelet, *op. cit.*, i, 32 *sqq.*

from the provinces, assembled in the garden of the Archbishop's palace to offer a defence of the Order. A lengthy wrangle ensued between the brethren and the Commissioners over the question of proctors to act for the Order and various details of procedure. Two priests and two knights were nominated as proctors; their first action was to draw up a protest containing demands which they desired to impose on the Commissioners. They asked for the release of all officers of the Order from the King's charge as being subject to intimidation, for the counsel of learned lawyers, and for full security for proctors and counsel; further, that apostate members should be taken into the custody of the Court, that priests who had heard the dying confessions of Templars should be examined, that the accusers should appear in person before the Commissioners, and be made liable to the Lex Talionis;[1] finally they demanded emphatically that all lay persons should be excluded from the Court and every possible means taken to secure freedom from intimidation.[2] Theoretically the last requests were matters of common fairness, but some of the others were outside of the Commissioners' orders. They were not judges listening to a trial, but a committee to take evidence. The presence of accusers was therefore an impossible demand, and the employment of learned counsel

[1] This was a principle of Roman law. *Qui calumniam non probat poenam debet incurrere quam si probasset reus utique sustineret.* It was definitely rejected in Inquisitorial trials. Cf. Lea, *Superstition and Force*, p. 513.

[2] Michelet, *op. cit.*, i, pp. 164 *sqq.*

was a debatable point. At a trial of tactical skill, despite their protests that they were unlettered men with no ability for law, the Templars were likely to prove too strong for the weak Commissioners, and without the presence of the lay officials of the King, unfair as that might be, the proceedings promised to become even more farcical than they were. It is well at any rate to offer this as a possible explanation of the position. Jacques de Molay had already given a foretaste of the temper that might be expected, and it is not a wild assumption to suppose that the seven or eight ecclesiastics who composed the Commission would have inspired very little fear or respect in the witnesses, once the King's officers were removed. The protest was overruled, and the hearing of witnesses was resumed on April 11th, and continued after an adjournment for Easter. The proctors for the defence put in another protest against the presence of lay persons in the Court and against the slovenly way in which witnesses were handled, with its encouragement of collusion. The examination went on until the second week of May, and in the opinion of the King's men was going none too well. Evidence against the Order was extracted too slowly, and the existing evidence was in some degree being vitiated by members retracting their original confessions on the plea that they were extorted by torture and maintained by terror. It is at this stage that the King's preference of expediency to right led to a grave crime. His point of view is open to appreciation though not to sympathy. He felt that much that he had

won in support of his case was slipping from his hands and only drastic action could maintain his superiority. The King's part in what followed is unproved, but it is practically certain. On May 11th the Archbishop of Sens, a brother of the King's minister Enguerrand de Marigny, proceeded against fifty-four individual Templars, who had retracted their confessions, as lapsed heretics. This action was on quite a different basis from anything hitherto done. Previous proceedings had been aimed at the Order, and no desire to punish individuals was displayed. The action of the Archbishop was no doubt strictly within the law, its purpose was no less clearly to intimidate the witnesses giving evidence. The proceedings were summary; no defence was allowed, and on the following day the fifty-four were burnt at the stake in Paris, every one of them protesting his innocence. The desired end was gained; the witnesses were so stupefied with terror that the Commission was forced to adjourn. In other dioceses the example set by the Archbishop was followed. At Rheims nine Templars were sent to the stake, at Rouen a large number (the figure is unknown), at Carcassonne several, while Thiebault, Duke of Lorraine, added further victims. The effect of this demonstration was successful; not only the witnesses but the Commissioners were cowed; for when the Court reassembled on November 3rd, only three members were present, and it had to adjourn once more. When it met again on December 17th the last element of interest disappeared; the proctors abandoned their

undertaking and the Commissioners agreed that they themselves might sit by deputy.[1] The proceedings had no spirit in them. Between December 17, 1310, and May 26, 1311, 231 witnesses were examined, most of them ready to assent to any proposition, until at last on May 26th the Court, presumably disgusted with its task, asked permission from the Pope to close on the grounds that there was no prospect of additional information. The evidence so collected was sent to the Pope, who on October 16th submitted it to the Council of Vienne. Reports from some, though perhaps not all, of the princes of Europe had also come to hand. The Pope then proposed to the Council that without further evidence or defence the Order should be condemned. It was believed that only four bishops supported this proposition, one Italian bishop and three of the friends of the King of France, who had already been sinister figures in the proceedings, the Archbishop of Sens and the Bishops of Rheims and Rouen. The King of France was prepared for obstruction : he made an armed demonstration in the neighbourhood, and came to the Council in person to raise the significant question of the condemnation of Boniface VIII. That was sufficient to silence the Council, and a majority of four-fifths of the votes was secured on a motion for the suppression of the Order. The Pope then issued the Bull *Vox in excelsis* dissolving the Order.[2] Its members returned to the lay state or joined other religious societies ; its property, except in Castile, Aragon,

[1] Michelet, *op. cit.*, i, pp. 275 *sqq.*

[2] Lea, *op. cit.*, iii, 319 *sqq.*

Majorca, and Portugal, was transferred to the Hospitallers. The heads of the Order who were held responsible for all that had happened were reserved for Papal judgment. Eventually, on March 19, 1314, the four—Jacques de Molay,[1] Grand Master; Geoffrey de Charney, Master of the Temple of Normandy; Hugh de Peraud, Visitor of France; and Godfrey de Gonneville, Master of the Temple in Aquitaine—were brought before a Court of three Cardinals and condemned to perpetual imprisonment. On this De Molay and De Charney jumped up in a passion of rage, denounced their own confessions, and were summarily burnt as lapsed heretics; the other two accepted penance. It is easy to feel a sentimental regard for the heroes of such a drama. Against that temptation we must be on our guard. Meanwhile, before offering a more definite opinion on the case, it will be well to consider the evidence on which the Pope was assumed to decide. Of the evidence given by the witnesses at the various examinations there is an enormous bulk, some given before the Inquisition, some before episcopal courts of inquiry, some before the special Papal Commission in France. The one striking division in this huge mass is between that collected in France and that collected in other parts of Europe. In the preliminary examinations in Paris 138 brethren were questioned, 132 of whom confessed to the

[1] For an attempt to exculpate de Molay, see P. Viollet, "Les Interrogations de J. de Molay," in *Mem. de l'Institut Nat. de France*, vol. 38. Paris, 1911.

most serious of the charges.[1] Of thirteen examined at the same time at Caen, twelve confessed; of sixty-nine at Clermont, forty confessed; at Carcassonne, five who were examined all confessed;[2] in a fragment of minutes preserved in the Vatican archives relating to some unknown place, probably in Provence, as most of the brethren examined belong to the dioceses of Vaison, Vienne, or Viviers, of the twenty-four examined all made some confession.[3] Of 231 brought before the Papal Commission at Paris, only seventeen denied all complicity, and one of these admitted that he knew by hearsay of the alleged crimes. Among those who confessed were the Grand Master and Hugh de Peraud, Visitor of France, the second most important member of the Order, and others of the highest officers, including several priests and a considerable proportion of knights. Torture was, of course, the method by which confessions were extorted and large numbers subsequently withdrew or modified their confessions. Some who were considered among the most culpable, such as Gerard de Villars, were never examined, for they escaped by flight, a fact of some significance.[4] In contrast stand the reports from the other countries of Europe. In England[5] 229 members of the Order

[1] Michelet, *Procès*, ii, 276 *sqq*.

[2] Documents in Prutz, *op. cit.*, 324–45. Finke, *op. cit.*, ii, 307–42. Dupuy, *op. cit.*, i, 121–80.

[3] Finke, *op. cit.*, ii, 342 *sqq*.

[4] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, ii, 74.

[5] Wilkins, *op. cit*, ii, 329–401. Stubbs, *Chr. of Edw. I and Edw. II*, Rolls Series. London, 1882, i, 176 *sqq*.

were arrested, including William de la Moor, the Master of the Temple in London. From January 9, 1308, to July 29, 1311, their case dragged on. The common law of England forbade the use of torture, and the presence of two Inquisitors sent over by the Pope was not likely to persuade the English to modify the law, for not even in the fourteenth century was the Papacy a great force in English life. Though Edward II was married to a daughter of Philip the Fair, he does not appear to have been amenable to his father-in-law's politics. Several letters of reproof came from the Pope, and eventually permission was given to employ torture, but even so there is no definite evidence that it was used. A significant light is thrown on France by a suggestion the Pope made to Edward in a letter dated December 23, 1310, that he should transfer his prisoners to Poitou in the English Dominions in France, where the common law of England would not hold.[1] That looks as if the one thing needful to destroy a Templar was French soil. Only three confessions were drawn from the English brethren, two from knights and one from a chaplain, and seventy-two external witnesses added a hodge-podge of more or less ridiculous gossip. One essential point was established by the English inquiry, the use of an Absolution formula by lay officers of the Order. The English Court summarized its findings that (1) there was no criminality in the reception of candidates to the

[1] Cited by C. Perkins, "The Trial of Knights Templars in England," *E. Hist. R.*, xxiv (1909), 432–47.

Order ; (2) receptions took place secretly and by night ; (3) the secrecy of receptions was enforced under oath ; (4) revelation of the secret ritual rendered a member liable to punishment ; (5) the secret reception might not be discussed, even privately, among the members ; (6) a formula of Absolution was pronounced by lay officers of the Order ; (7) members were required to increase the wealth of the Order by right or wrong ; (8) members were forbidden to confess to any except chaplains of the Order. In the end many members abjured the Order, fifty-nine in London and twenty-four at York before the Bishop of Whithorn. The Master of the London Temple, William de la Moor, obstinately refused to admit any wrong in the Order and died still a prisoner in the Tower on December 20, 1312.[1]

Of the examinations in Scotland only two interrogatories of Templars have been found, in neither of which is any crime admitted. Forty-one external witnesses gave rambling evidence chiefly directed at the avarice of the brethren. In Ireland, of thirty examined only one, a chaplain, admitted that there was even suspicion against the Order. Forty-one external witnesses again reported vaguely what they had heard as common talk. It is worthy of note that only in the British Islands was outside evidence taken on any large scale—a few outside witnesses were examined in France—and in con-

[1] The final proceedings are recorded in Archbishop Greenfield's Register at York, which has not yet been printed in full. Extracts in Raine, J., *Fasti Eboracenses*. London, 1863.

trast to the methods of the Inquisitors the British Ecclesiastical Courts maintained a higher standard of evidence and methods of taking evidence.[1]

In Italy some confessions were obtained; in the Papal States seven confessed out of eight arrested, and in the kingdom of Naples some fifty were arrested and apparently confessed.[2] For Lombardy there are no reports available, and thirty-two brethren seized at Messina denied every charge. So in Cyprus the seventy-five brethren there made a complete denial.[3] Acquittal was secured in Castile, Leon, and Portugal as well as in Aragon where, as in England, torture was by law forbidden; the Aragon brethren put up an armed resistance, and were finally acquitted of all guilt by the local council of Tarragona in October 1312. In the Balearic Islands, which included Rousillon, Cerdagne, and Montpellier on the Mainland, no adverse evidence was obtained, and no torture was used.[4] Of Navarre nothing is known. In the German States there were few members of the Order, its place being taken by the local Order of Teutonic Knights. But such Templars as were there were acquitted, Wild-und-Rheingraf Hugh, Preceptor of Grumbach, imitating the Aragon brethren and making a demonstration under arms on behalf of the Order.[5]

The most feasible theory, though that is not flawless, is to localize the guilt of the Order in France, to suppose that in France a secret body of

[1] Finke, pp. 312 *sqq.*
[2] *Ibid.*, 320 *sqq.*
[3] *Ibid.*, 322–3.
[4] *Ibid.*, 282 *sqq.*
[5] *Ibid.*, 317–20.

criminals had captured the Order and perverted its ideals. But the brethren examined in France had been admitted in many places ; two of them for example, Robert de S. Just and Godfrey de Gonneville, who confessed to most of the crimes, had been admitted in England, though it must also be noticed that De Molay had once been Grand Preceptor of England. The admissions were made by a great variety of persons and covered a period of fifty years. It might seem that the clue to the confessions of guilt must be sought, not in the place of admission, but in the place of examination. It was those whose examinations took place within range of the arm of the French Crown officials who admitted their crimes. That fact must lead to one of two conclusions : either the method of examination adopted in France was so thorough that it reached the truth, or it was of such a character that it either intimidated or persuaded its victims into a general conspiracy of lying. The latter alternative is usually accepted. If the confessions of the brethren were false, the only explanation suggested is that they were extorted by torture. We cannot doubt that torture is a terrible machine, but it is not a simple piece of psychology that some hundreds of men, many of them of tried courage and experienced in suffering, should, even under torture lie, some intelligently and some grotesquely, but all unanimously should lie with a great show of consistency. It is true that they gave their evidence in answer to leading questions, but even then the spectacle is startling, and still more the

system that produced that spectacle. Before attempting any further solution of the problem we may learn something from the evidence. In the meantime we shall do well to emphasize two points : (1) The confessions of the Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, and of the Visitor of France, Hugh de Peraud, and of one or two other of the high officials, given at the beginning of the proceedings, paralysed the members of the Order ; the peculiar position of the Grand Master made him the Order itself ; loyal members, if innocent, could only assume that the crimes of the Order, like other incidental facts in its history, occurred without their knowledge, and if guilty, they had no further occasion to uphold a cause which their principals had abandoned. That feeling is clear in the protests every member made to the Papal Commission when asked if he wished to defend the Order ; the invariable reply was that it was the duty of the Grand Master to defend the Order, and without him they would do nothing. (2) The second notable point is that it is known that the examinations in France were thorough and carried out under the supervision of civil officials. In no other country was there much, if any, pretence of enthusiasm for the task. So far as the evidence goes, it was in England that the greatest trouble was taken, and in England there was much noise, issuing of writs, and exchange of letters, but not a remarkable display of zealous action. The King was plainly on the side of the Templars. Greenfield the Archbishop of York showed a curious indifference in absenting himself from the final proceedings

in his diocese and leaving the unimportant Bishop of Whithorn to preside. In practically every other country of Europe the action of the ruling princes was casual and perfunctory. In justice to the French King it is only fair to recognize this ; while everything he did may be represented as intimidating the members of the Order, it is also true that the attitude of the other European princes was calculated to give the Order every possible encouragement.

VI

THE French evidence is the largest as well as the fullest, and would be completely damning if it were true. Of the French evidence, that given before the Inquisitor and his deputies at the preliminary examinations might naturally be considered better than that given before the Papal Commission, both from the greater respect the Inquisitor commanded and from the smaller opportunity of collusion offered to the brethren at the earlier stage of the process. A tabulation of the examination before the Inquisitor gives the following :

Number examined, 138.	
Confessed renunciation of Christ ...	111
Kiss in some abnormal form	109
Spitting or other insult to cross ...	121
Licence to vice	99
Idolatrous head	8
Omissions in Canon...	1
Denied all charges	6

Many of the witnesses had been admitted to the Order by the Grand Master or by Hugh de Peraud. Most of them protested that they had renounced with the lips and not with the heart, under compulsion either of violence or of the vow of obedience, and had spit near rather than on the cross, and had avoided kissing literally as ordered. Rainer de Larchent deposed that he had kissed the brother

who admitted him on the navel, the spine, and the lips; he had renounced Christ and spit on the cross; he understood that the Psalm recited at admissions, "Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell at one together," was used with an obscene significance. He had further seen on twelve separate occasions at Chapter meetings a bearded head which the brethren present adored and called their Saviour. The said head, he believed, was in the custody of the Grand Master or other brother presiding at the Chapter.[1] William de Giac, a servitor of the diocese of Besançon and the personal attendant of the Grand Master, deposed to the kiss on the navel and spine, the renunciation of Christ, and the head. He also admitted committing offences with the Grand Master three times in one night in Cyprus.[2] William de Herbley, the King's almoner, in addition to the usual confession, deposed that he had seen the head spoken of in the hands of Hugh de Peraud in two separate Chapters, and so far as he could observe, it was of wood, silver-gilt, with a beard.[3] Robert de Moinboin deposed to the renunciation, spitting, and licence to practise vice, and further stated that he had made his confession to a Friar Minor, who refused him absolution on the ground that the matter of his confession made it a case reserved for the Pope's decision.[4] John de Pruvino deposed that he only consented to the renunciation and spitting after eight days' imprisonment on bread

[1] Michelet, ii, p. 278.
[2] *Ibid.*, ii, p. 289.
[3] *Ibid.*, ii, p. 299.
[4] *Ibid.*, ii, p. 342.

and water,[1] while Peter de Laigneville similarly gave way on being threatened with a place where he could not see his feet.[2] John de Chounes deposed that he was told that Christ was a false prophet and he must believe only in the God of Heaven.[3] The most important depositions before the Inquisitor at Paris after that of the Grand Master were those of Hugh de Peraud, Ralph de Gisi, and Godfrey de Gonneville, of whom Hugh and Godfrey eventually appeared among the four principal criminals held responsible for the corruption of the Order.

Hugh de Peraud, knight, Visitor of the Order in France, deposed that at his admission into the Order he had been required to renounce Christ and spit on the cross, though the latter action he had evaded. When admitting new members himself, he always observed the same practice and required the candidates further to kiss him on the navel and spine ; he also gave every candidate permission to practise vice. All this he was in the habit of doing *ore non corde* ; that is to say, he meant nothing by it. He did not think this ceremonial was usual ; but on second thoughts he supposed it was. He had himself handled the head spoken of at Montpellier, and in the company of others he had adored it. He had sent it to Peter Alemandin, Preceptor of Montpellier. It was a head with four feet, two before and two behind.[4]

[1] Michelet, ii, p. 354.
[2] *Ibid.*, ii, p. 415.
[3] *Ibid.*, ii, p. 384.
[4] *Ibid.*, ii, p. 361.

The witness next examined, Ralph de Gisi, Preceptor of Campania, admitted the renunciation, spitting, licence to practise vice, kiss on the navel and spine. He further, on seven separate occasions, had seen the head at Chapters held by Hugh de Peraud as well as in some other Chapters. The head was of terrible aspect and looked like a fiend (*gallicè d'un maufe*). It frightened witness to look at it. The brethren all adored it, as, after renouncing Christ, nothing was too bad. He particularly remembered Gerard de Villars adoring the head. (More than one of the brethren had evidence to bring against Gerard.) Witness had himself admitted other candidates according to the ritual described, except only the kiss *in illo vili loco*.[1]

Godfrey de Gonneville, knight, is an interesting witness, not only because he was one of the four principals, but also because he was admitted to the Order in England by Robert de Tortaville, Master of the Temple in London. Witness was afraid to renounce Christ. Robert then said, "Do it boldly, I swear on peril of my soul that it will never prejudice you in soul or conscience; it is the custom of the Order, introduced by the promise of an evil Grand Master who was in the Soldan's power and could not escape unless he swore that if he escaped he would introduce this custom into our Order, namely, that all admitted should deny Jesus Christ, and such has been observed and you must do it." Witness still resisted and was not pressed, on condition he

[1] Michelet, ii, p. 363.

would swear that he had denied when questioned. Witness then spat on the hand of Robert held over the cross. He believed that he was treated with favour because he and his uncle, who was a friend of the King of England, had done great service to the said Robert. He had refrained from confessing before because he believed he was forgiven by the absolution of the priest to whom he had confessed. He had spared those he had admitted, or had handed them to others for that part of the admission ceremony. Further, witness said that he had been denounced to the Grand Master for omitting these rites, so at least he heard from a priest of the Order. He had wished to denounce the Order, but could not bring himself to do so on account of the benefits he had received from it. He had heard that the errors were introduced in the way described and by statutes of Roncellinus, a former Grand Master, or of Thomas Berard.[1]

It may be noticed that there was no Grand Master named Roncellinus; possibly the name refers to Gerard de Riderfort (1185), who was captured by Saladin at the battle of Tiberias and released in return for the surrender of Ascalon. Concerning him, a curious statement is quoted by Addison[2] from one of the chroniclers, to the effect that the Count of Tripoli refused to surrender him a certain lady, whence arose the great quarrel between them which caused the loss of the Holy Land. Thomas Berard, who was Grand

[1] Michelet, ii, p. 398. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 169.

Master from 1257 to 1273, was an Englishman. Some of the brethren deposed that they understood the renunciation of Christ to be in some way an imitation of St. Peter's denial of his Master; others understood it as a test of loyalty to the officers of the Order, or a test of their power of endurance, and believed that those who refused to renounce Christ were the sooner sent overseas, presumably less to get them out of the way than because they had shown that the Saracens would be unlikely to shake their faith.

Among the depositions collected at Poitiers in August 1308 for the Inquisitors, the most curious is that of Stephen de Troyes, a servitor of the Order. He deposed that he had been admitted to the Order by Hugh de Peraud; he was required to renounce all the apostles and saints of God. Hugh then showed him an image of Christ and said: "Do you see the image of the prophet called the Crucified?" Witness replied, "Nay, I see the image of the Lord Jesus Christ who suffered for us." Hugh said, "You must renounce him who is represented by that image." Witness refused, whereupon one of the brethren drew his sword and threatened to run him through; at this witness obeyed, as all joined in threatening him with death if he refused. Hugh then said, "For your greater honour and your great favour and greater brotherhood, I kiss you"; and kissed witness under the spine, on the navel, and on the lips; he girded witness with a shirt and cord which (as he told witness) had been wound round the head of

a certain idol which they held as Saviour and Maker of the Order. Yearly on the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, at the general Chapter of the Order at Paris, the head was brought in by a priest in a procession of the brethren with lights ; it was laid on the altar ; it was a human head without any silver or gold, very pale and discoloured, with a grizzled beard like a Templar's. The Visitor then said, "Let us go and adore him and do homage to him who has made us and not left us."[1] This was done by all the brethren present. Witness had heard that it was the head of Hugh de Payens, the first Grand Master. From the neck to the shoulders the head was covered with gold, silver, and precious stones. Witness admitted that he had deserted from the Order. Further he deposed that a brother, Paul de Valleceli, had attempted to seduce him to vice, and when witness refused, the said brother had struck him on the jaw and broken three of his teeth, the effect of which was visible to that very day. The said brother also told him, "You do not know the rules of the Order. It is one of the rules that no brother may refuse another." Witness had complained to the Visitor, who had replied that the said brother had done right, for he must never refuse brethren a service. Witness believed there was a secret rule in the Order, known only to the older brethren. Witness also believed that the brethren did not receive the Eucharist, but received unconsecrated hosts. During his time in the

[1] Perhaps an allusion to the idea that their failures in Palestine showed that Christ had deserted them, whence they had lost faith in Him.

Order witness had never communicated at all nor made his confession. He had left the Order on account of its vices and at the instigation of his brother.[1]

The depositions in the fragmentary minute in the Vatican Archives,[2] probably of Provençal witnesses, have several peculiarities. The formula of denial was that the candidate should renounce Christ, the Blessed Virgin, the saints and all their works. All deposed that they were required not only to spit on the cross, but *super crucem mingere*, to trample it, drag it by a cord along the ground, and sometimes to sit on it. A cat appeared, which is variously described as red, black, brown, and white; it stood by an idol and was kissed on the back or *sub cauda*. None of them knew where the cat came from or whither it went, but one or two supposed it was the devil in the form of a cat, or an evil thing; beside the cat there stood usually in a window an idol or head, which one witness believed was called Magomet, though a knight who had been admitted in Portugal named it Tomar. A unique feature of this series of examinations is that several witnesses deposed that women had appeared with whom in some instances the brethren had misbehaved. One witness believed that they were really devils, as no real women could have got into a place when the doors were fast. The Portuguese knight, however, was inclined to think them real, as those he had seen at Acon (not at his own admission) wore the peculiar head-dress of the district.

[1] Finke, ii, p. 334. [2] *Ibid.*, ii, pp. 342 *sqq.*

The evidence given at the Papal Commission on analysis stands as follows :

	Confessed to Acts.	Knew of them by hearsay or otherwise.
Total number examined, 231		
Renunciation of Christ	183	1
Spitting on the cross...	180	—
Mock kiss	96	6
Absolution by lay officers	8	5
Secrecy concerning admissions ...	5	1
Head or idol...	8	4
Girdles touched by idol	3	2
Confession only to priest of order ...	6	—
Cat	—	2
Licence to vice	78	1
Omissions in Canon of Mass ...	6	—
Negligence or restriction of alms ...	4	3
Acquisition for Order by right or wrong	3	1
Ignorance of all charges	17	—

It might be urged that the evidence before the Papal Commission was invalidated by the terror inspired by the action taken against individual members, resulting in the tragic executions of May 12th. This at least cannot be proved, for the confessions made before the Commission at the sittings previous to that date show no marked attempt to plead innocence ; the unfortunate brethren who suffered had not retracted their confessions in their evidence before the Commissioners but elsewhere

presumably in private. In fact the evidence before the Commissioners has neither more nor less value than the evidence proffered in the earlier examinations. It is like the evidence given elsewhere in France, and unlike that given in any other country.

John de Hinquemet, a renegade servitor, who is interesting because he was an Englishman of the diocese of London, deposed that at his admission to the Order he had been taken behind the altar and ordered to renounce Jesus thrice and spit on a cross; the first he had done verbally but not with his heart, and he had spit thrice near the cross. He had been given by the chaplain a girdle of white wool to wear continually, and the said chaplain had told him that the girdle had been round a certain head; what head, witness did not know, nor had he ever seen a head; he had been kissed publicly on the lips at his admission, and secretly behind the altar he had been kissed on the breast and between the shoulders. He had been sworn to secrecy. He had since seen Thomas, porter of the house of the Order at Naumata, give good corn to the pigs. Of the other charges, he believed most were true, though he had never seen anything to make him sure, but he had heard reports from men whose names he had forgotten.[1]

Gerard de Passagio, another renegade, though confessing to several of the charges, denied that the girdles worn by the Order had touched any idol; they were bought or acquired by the brethren in any way they thought proper and were part of the

[1] Michelet, i, p. 190.

regular dress of members.[1] Baldwin de St. Just, Preceptor of Pontoise, admitted that he had been warned that he must not refuse a brother to share his bed, but he had never understood this in any sinful sense.[2]

James de Troyes, another renegade, whom the Commission considered so loquacious and inconsistent that they cross-examined him severely, volunteered information of various kinds; he had not, he said, heard of any one making "a fig-finger" at the crucified; he had heard that brother Ralph de Gisi had a familiar demon whose counsel made him rich and wise.[3]

(This is the Ralph de Gisi whose own evidence before the Inquisitors is given above.)

The fullest account of the ceremonies of admission is that given by Gerald de Causso, a renegade knight of the diocese of Rodez.[4] He deposed that in his opinion only a section of evil members of the Order conducted the objectionable kind of admissions. At the normal admission the candidate was warned of the hardships of the life he was undertaking and the solemnity of the oath required of him. The versicle and response,

V. Behold how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell at one together.

R. Send them help from the holy place,

was followed by the prayer to the Holy Spirit, God who didst teach, etc. A long address on the rules

[1] Michelet, i, p. 208.
[2] *Ibid.*, i, p. 241.
[3] *Ibid.*, i, p. 254.
[4] *Ibid.*, i, p. 379.

of the Order was then given, immediately after which the candidates were taken aside privately and required to renounce God. Witness did so himself at the point of the sword. Witness and two other candidates were required to spit on the cross, which they all refused to do. This secret ceremony was conducted by servitors, the original open admission being carried out by the Preceptor of the Province. One of the servitors next told them that if they felt carnal motions they must satisfy themselves with each other rather than with women. Personally witness had heard only of three members who attempted to put this advice into practice, and they had all been imprisoned in the castle of Peregor during the mastership of Thomas Berard. This he knew from reading. Witness did not believe the servitors would have dared to perform the ceremony if they had not been authorized to do so. He had not dared to publish what he knew before the arrest of the brethren, for he would not have been believed, and he himself, if not the Order, would have suffered. If he had left the Order he had no livelihood. The witness then enlarged on the Order's breaches of Church usage; the Grand Master was not instituted by the Pope, brethren beyond the sea were not corrected under the advice of the Bishop of Jerusalem, brethren were not allowed to have copies of the Rule, they were not allowed to appeal to Rome, they were not allowed to have books, and any they had were seized by the Grand Master and either burnt or kept by him. It was common talk among the older members that the

Order had fallen from its purposes, since men of learning had entered it. In meetings of the Chapter a general confession was made according to the usual formula, "I confess to Almighty God," etc., and a priest gave a general absolution; witness did not believe personally that such confession and absolution availed for mortal sins. In the course of his charge the Grand Master stood and said, "Of all those things which ye have omitted to tell us through shame or fear of the justice of the Order, we grant pardon as far as we may or should." This preceded the General Confession. The evidence of this witness was taken down verbatim and read over to him. He demurred at the record of the quasi-absolution of the Grand Master. It ran thus, he said, in the vernacular: "Et de tot aysco que vos nos layssatz a dire per onta de la chair o per paor de la justiza de la meyso aytal pardo vos en fam quom podem ni devem." He understood it to refer to the offences they had not failed to confess; the Court thought it was the offences they had omitted to confess. Witness himself believed that stupid and ignorant brethren thought this gave them absolution from sins they had not confessed. Ralph de Gisi repeated at length the evidence he had given before the Inquisitors with additions on the Absolution formula of the Grand Master which had not been a subject of inquiry at the earlier examinations.[1] Hugh de Peraud and Gerard de Villars again were mentioned by name as the leading offenders.

[1] Michelet, i, p. 394.

Nearly all of the witnesses emphasized their moral innocence, as they had only performed what was required of them under the sternest compulsion, and one or two of them offered explanations of the ceremonial. John de Buffavent had been told by the brother who admitted him that the ribaldry of renunciation and spitting was of no real significance, *non est nisi quædam truffa*.[1] Odo de Buris had been encouraged in similar terms, and one of the officiating brethren said that in his country they would renounce Christ a hundred times for a flea, *pro una pulice*.[2] Peter Picardi deposed that his confessor had suggested that the renunciation was a test of his faith, and had he refused it he would have been sent overseas earlier.[3] If the renunciation ceremony really did take place, this is a plausible explanation of it; as the Order degenerated, men joined it as an easy life and were ready to pretend a weak faith that they might not be sent to Palestine. This is more plausible than the suggestion of one or two other brethren which Michelet accepted, that the renunciation was a ritual imitation of St. Peter's denial of his Master; for if so, it was an entirely pointless ceremony which led to nothing. Raynandus Bergeron, a servitor, mentioned what we have noticed already in examining the evidence before the Inquisitors, that in the opinion of his confessor the sins he confessed were cases reserved for the jurisdiction of the Pope, for which a priest could not give absolution.[4]

[1] Michelet, i, p. 509.
[2] *Ibid.*, ii, p. 110.
[3] *Ibid.*, i, p. 522.
[4] *Ibid.*, i, p. 591.

This difficulty is met perhaps by the evidence of Hugo de Narsac, Preceptor of Espaisi, who stated that the priests of the Order had a special licence direct from the Pope, and the rule against confession to outside priests might be interpreted with the same intention.[1]

In England[2] after examination and cross-examination, three members of the Order were induced to make some confession. Stephen de Stapelbrigge, a fugitive from the Order, deposed that he had been admitted at Dynesley by Brian le Jay, Grand Preceptor of England; he had privately been required in the chapel to deny that Christ Jesus was God and that Mary was his mother, and to spit on the cross; he had obeyed through fear and had spit near the cross. Thomas Tocci de Thoroldeby, a servitor, and also a fugitive from the Order, first confessed only that he had fled through fear of the Inquisitor, but re-examined four days later, he deposed that he had been compelled to renounce Christ and to spit on the cross and spit also on an image of the Virgin, but had evaded this by kissing her foot; he had further heard Brian le Jay say a hundred times that Jesus was not God but man, and that a hair of the beard of a Saracen was worth more than the whole body of a Christian; further,

[1] Michelet, ii, p. 205.

[2] The proceedings in the British Isles are recorded in two principal MSS., one in the British Museum, Cotton, Julian, B. XII, and one in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, 454. The bulk of these is printed in Wilkins, *Concilia*, vol. ii. An abstract of the proceedings is given in a Vatican MS printed by Schottmüller, *op. cit.*, ii, 78–102, and an abstract of the abstract in the *Chronicles of Edward I and II*, ed. Stubbs, Rolls Series, i.

the priest stood in Chapter "like a beast," and the Master pronounced the absolution; in Palestine the Templars had favoured the Saracens; finally, witness for many years past had never seen the Host without thinking of the devil, but that very morning he had heard Mass with great devotion and without any such thought. John de Stoke, priest of the Order, deposed that eighteen months after his admission in the preceptory of Garwy in Herefordshire, in the presence of Jacques de Molay and two foreign knights, he was commanded to sit on the end of the bed; a crucifix was brought, and he was asked whose image it bore; on his saying, "The image of Christ who suffered for the redemption of the world," Jacques de Molay had replied, "No, but the son of a woman, who was crucified for calling Himself son of God"; witness was then asked to renounce Christ; he refused, but was threatened with being put into a sack; swords were drawn, whereupon on assurance that this was a custom of the Order, he had renounced Christ but in word only, and had been bidden to put his faith in the Great Omnipotent God.[1]

In the British Islands more witnesses from outside the Order were examined than elsewhere. Without exception they told a series of cock and bull stories at second and third hand. John de Nassington, Master of Arts, had been told by two knights that at Temple Hurst once a year the brethren worshipped a calf. William de la Forde, rector of Crofton in the diocese of York, had heard from

[1] Wilkins, *Concilia*, ii, pp. 383 *sqq*.

William de Reynbur, an Augustinian priest now deceased, that brother Patrick de Ripon, a Templar, had confessed to him that at his admission to the Order he had been required to renounce God and Christ, spit on the cross, uncover his posteriors towards the altar, and kiss the image of a calf which stood on the altar. Witness had only heard this after the arrest of the Templars. John de Wederal, a Friar Minor, sent in a written deposition stating that he had heard a Templar, Robert de Baysat, running in a meadow crying, "Alas that I was born, for I have renounced God and sold myself to the devil." An Augustinian monk deposed that he had heard a Templar say that a man had no more soul than a dog.[1]

The evidence collected in England is digested in Annales Londinenses[2] from a document in the Vatican entitled *Demminutio laboris examinentium processus contra ordinem Templi in Anglia quasi per modum rubricarum.*[3] One or two of the facts or fictions put forward (always by external witnesses) are peculiar to the English evidence. Several declared that the members of the Order were in the habit of wearing a cross in the seat of their breeches and of worshipping a calf. One or two stated that members of the Order spat the Host from their mouths or otherwise avoided receiving the Sacrament. Several Templars themselves admitted that the lay officers used an Absolution

[1] MS. Bodl., folios 5, 27 *sqq.*
[2] *Chron. of Edward I and II*, vol. i, ed. Stubbs, Rolls Series.
[3] Printed in Schottmüller, *Untergang*, ii, pp. 78–103.

formula, and some said it was considered valid, others that the lay officers had power to remit the penance imposed by a priest.

What, then, is to be made of all this evidence? At the outset its primary value is weakened by two facts. The substance of the charges was commonly known, first by the proclamation of Nogaret and the King's officials in Paris, and later in every detail through the Papal Bulls. The members of the Order and the external witnesses knew exactly what evidence was wanted. The second fact is that at no time was any attempt made to segregate the witnesses and prevent collusion. Over and over again the minutes show small parties of brethren following one another into the Court and giving exactly the same evidence, then another party comes with slightly different details from the last batch, but all agreeing with each other. Groups examined in distant places like that of which the record is preserved in the Vatican all agree on some outrageous detail like the cat sitting in a window beside an idol, a detail apparently unknown outside this particular group of brethren. When cross-examined concerning the colour of the cat, they are so far out of agreement that one says it was white, another black, and others red or brown. So with the description of the alleged idols. Some witnesses are certain only that the idol was covered with gold, others are hazy about details except that they are positive there was no gold anywhere about it. And so on. There is only one possible inference. Groups of the brethren agreed together to make certain

statements. If they agreed to lie—and lie is what they must have done—on one point, there is no safe ground for assuming *a priori* that they did not lie from first to last. There is thus a strong temptation simply to dismiss all the evidence so laboriously collected as a fabric of worthless invention. Tempting as that course may be, it will hardly do. Even if these lurid confessions were false, the impression still remains that there was something radically wrong with the Order of the Temple. There is an under-current of hostility displayed by the Order itself against Jacques de Molay and against some of the higher officers like Hugh de Peraud and Gerard de Villars. Popular opinion may be of little account, but it is not entirely worthless. Long before the arrest English boys had learned to say "Beware of the kiss of the Templars." Absurd as were many of the reports offered by the outside witnesses at the inquiries in England and Scotland, they point at least to a general suspicion. In the face of this popular impression and the huge mass of the evidence collected by the Inquisitors, it is an unsatisfactory solution of the problem to find nothing but an elaborate conspiracy of the members of the Order to save themselves by a series of concocted fables.

No human being will ever be able to say with certainty that this Templar's evidence is true and that is false. But a tentative solution of the problem may be offered. We have already seen that some of the charges are improbable on *a priori* grounds. The inherent absurdity of the cat found little support in the evidence and that entirely self-contradictory.

The mysterious head may have existed, a relic of some kind, the use of which was perfectly innocent. The charge of insulting the sacraments was so commonly levelled in analogous cases that it also may be dismissed, for very little evidence to support it was discovered. Homosexuality, as we have noticed, is again a stock accusation, and from the confessions made was not more actually common among the Templars than in other spheres of mediæval life. The evidence given in the examinations all supports the *a priori* unlikelihood of these as general crimes.

Two or perhaps three of the charges may be regarded as definitely proved. Secrecy was enforced upon the members ; admissions were clandestine, and confessions to priests outside the Order were either prohibited or discouraged. Secondly, the higher officers did make the Order the first claim on the members' life and work, and that may easily have been interpreted as a claim that the interest of the Order must be pressed by right means or wrong. The substance of these charges is really included in the Rule of the Order ; they were not in fact pressed in the taking of evidence, for they were obviously of very secondary importance. Thirdly, it is certain that the Grand Master and other lay officers used a formula of absolution. This may or may not have been considered equivalent to the absolution of a priest. In any case there were precedents. Monastic rules (cf. the Rule of St. Benedict 7, 45, 46) encouraged confession to the Head of a house, who often was a lay brother. If

the need arose, confession to any righteous man was recognized by the Church. The Sire de Joinville in 1250 heard the confession of the Constable of Cyprus and gave him absolution.[1] Lea notices that the principle is first questioned by Artesanus in 1317, possibly as a result of the affair of the Templars.[2] We may accept this charge as proved. Twenty-two English brethren agreed that after a general confession the presiding officer used a regular formular of absolution, either *Absolvo te in nomine Patris, etc.*, or *Remitto tibi in nomine, etc.* But as a charge against the Order this fact could not reasonably be considered until the Church had more rigidly defined the quasi-priestly authority of lay heads of religious Orders.

Here may be considered more fully a point already noticed: if the brethren were guilty of the acts confessed at the examinations, and had made confession of them to a priest, would not the priest have been bound to treat such confessions as cases reserved and submitted them either to his bishop or to the Pope? Cases reserved for the Pope in the thirteenth century are given in the following doggerel hexameters:

> Incestum faciens, deflorans, aut homicida,
> Pontificem quæras Papam si miseris ignem,
> Sacrilegus, patris percussor, vel sodomita,
> Si percussisti clericum, Simonve fuisti.

The Templar cases would have come under the heading of sacrilege, and as we have seen, one or

[1] *Memoires*, ii, p. 20. [2] *Hist. of Auricular Confession*, i, p. 223.

two members deposed that the priest to whom they made their confessions treated them as cases reserved. But the rule to confess only to chaplains within the Order may have been designed because the priests of the Order were privileged with special licence from the Pope, and the whole question is obscured by the fact that the Templars were extra-diocesan. In any case no decisive argument can be reached, for it always remains possible that some cases actually did come before the Pope.

The two charges which are of vital importance to which indeed the rest of the case against the Order may be regarded as an unimportant appendage, are those of Renunciation of Christ, with its accompanying insults to the cross, and the mock ceremonies in the admission ritual. These two stand quite apart from the rest of the indictment. Their symbolical meaning is plain ; the renunciation of Christ is a parody of the Baptismal renunciation and the spitting on the cross corresponds to the signing of the candidate with the cross at Baptism. The triple renunciation of Satan is reproduced, either as some witnesses stated, by renouncing Christ thrice, or by renouncing Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and all the saints of God with all their works. In the same way the Templars' kisses were meant to parody the kiss of reception, which was part of the ritual of admission to every religious order. Moreover, these are the two charges which were generally admitted in the examinations, wherever anything at all was admitted. The two per-

formances are not on the same plane. The kissing ceremony was a coarse piece of buffoonery, typical of the Middle Ages, with many counterparts in mediæval art and literature. The threefold renunciation was a deliberately refined and almost artistic blasphemy, to which there are no exact parallels.[1] In spite of the general weakness of the evidence, it is difficult to refuse entirely to entertain these two charges. The true key will probably never be available, but a sufficiently plausible theory may be constructed. The trouble lay, not in the Order, but in a small group of French brethren, among whom the leaders were De Molay, De Peraud, and De Villars. It is not in the least likely that these men had inherited, as some witnesses suggested, from the mysterious Gerard de Riderfort or from Thomas Berard, some quasi-Moslem Unitarian tradition, much less as another witness thought, that they dabbled in learning, which put Christianity in a different light, a light coloured by the failure of the Crusades to maintain the Christian conflict against the alien religion of the Saracen. They were not a society conspicuous for intellectual curiosity or intellectual ability. They *were* a group of idle soldiers with little religious sentiment. It is not a wild surmise that their idleness and carelessness expressed themselves in the blasphemy and vulgar horseplay that in the Middle Ages passed for humour.

[1] No exact parallel, that is, of so early date. When trials for witchcraft became common after the fourteenth century, it is a charge appearing almost invariably. Cf. Murray, M.A., *The Witch Cult in W. Europe*, pp. 77 *sqq.* Oxford, 1922.

If this explanation will stand, the internal state of the Order may be summarised : Lay absolution, secrecy, and the supreme claims of the Order on the service of its members were proved beyond reasonable dispute ; the worship of a cat was a pure fabrication ; the so-called idols were harmless relics, and the cords alleged to have touched these idols were the ordinary girdles worn by the Order, to which no sinister meaning need be attached. Sexual perversion was not more common among the Templars than in other spheres of contemporary life, but it was not uncommon everywhere. The Eucharist was not systematically insulted in the Order. But a mock baptism and a mock admission ceremony were of frequent occurrence among the hardy spirits of the Order. That these acts had any serious meaning is improbable. The inquiry or trial, however, was not directed to investigate the character of the Order, but to examine the single question of heresy. To the mediæval mind heresy was a sin in a sense that murder, robbery, adultery, and dishonesty were not. Utterly unworthy of its profession, as incidents like that revealed in the Scottish charter already quoted show the Order to be, such facts have no bearing on the actual trial. We are brought, then, to the conclusion that technically the Order was innocent of the charge of heresy. Its members were, however, morally guilty of much worse social disorders, violence, bloodshed, and blasphemous buffoonery. So that the technical miscarriage of justice (if so it is to be called) that condemned the Order was the

best and morally the justest thing that could have happened.

The Council of Vienne pursued a wise course. Without actually declaring the Order guilty, it decreed its suppression. The disposal of the property of the Order raised obvious questions. Its property in Portugal was transferred intact to the new order of Jesus Christ. That in Aragon, Castile, and the Balearic Islands was administered by the Hospitallers for the surviving Templars in those dominions. Elsewhere, by order of the Council of Vienne, it was allocated absolutely to the Hospital subject only to pensions payable to certain survivors of the Templars. In actual fact large spoliations took place. The property of the Order in France was temporarily held by the King ; considerable debts that he owed to the Order were cancelled on the ground that no debt to a heretic was recognizable. After securing indemnity for expenses of maintenance and examination of the Templars at the time of the trial, the King allowed the greatly reduced estates to be handed over to the Hospital. The King cannot be acquitted of the accusation of spoliation. It is not, however, a just inference that this spoliation was deliberately planned from the beginning. Even in England where there is no suggestion of a royal plot against the Order, the transfer was made with considerable profit to the King. He administered the whole of the property until November 1313,[1] and even in 1324 the Hospital had failed to secure the Temple

[1] Rymer, *Fœd*, ii, pp. 236–7

charters and deeds.[1] Apparently despairing of ever securing certain of the properties, Larcher, Prior of the Hospitallers, on August 19, 1324 deeded to the King in fee simple the former Temple estates of Temple Hirst, Temple Newsam, Flaxflete, Deneye, and Strode, of the annual value of £432.[2] This he seems to have done as a bribe against further loss, the King having suggested that all Templar lands were escheated either to the Crown or to the tenant-in-chief.

Popular opinion, which had been against the Templars at the time of their arrest, swung back in their favour after the cruel and futile executions of May 1310. Nothing touched the popular imagination so much as the sudden deaths of the Pope and William Nogaret, not long after the Council of Vienne had given its verdict. They had been summoned, so it was whispered, to face their victims before the judgment seat of God. But if the wanton executions of May 1310 be set aside, there is little to be said in favour of the Templars. There is a strong presumption that the Order was corrupt spiritually if not morally, and there is an undeniable certainty that its existence could be no longer continued without gravely menacing the States of Europe. Philip the Fair was one of the first statesmen to develop the modern idea of nationality. His action against the Templars is

[1] Cal. Cl. Rolls, 1323–7, pp. 126, 208, 219.

[2] Cal. Pat. Rolls, Rich. II, i, p. 444. Perkins, *Wealth of Knights-Templars* (*Amer. Hist. Rev.*, xv, pp. 252 *sqq.*), estimates the total annual value of the English estates at £4,720 (*circa*). (This = about £70,000 in modern currency.)

simply a contribution to the cause of progress. It was not the act of obscurantism against a society of enlightened men. Rather on the contrary it was one of the earliest protests against the corruption of the Church and the unjustifiable encroachment of the Church upon society. The affair of the Templars, though conducted under the auspices of the Inquisition and displayed as a defence of the Church, was really one of the first stages in the assertion of nationality which reached full development in the Reformation. The part played by Philip against the Templars was replayed by Henry VIII against the English monasteries, played with similar mistakes in detail and similar outrages, but with a similar justice in its final purpose. Reason will regret those unnecessary cruelties and wanton acts of barbarism, but hardly will reason say that it would have been well for the Order of the Temple to have continued ; and many will even think it would have been better for the Church and for the world if the Order had never been at all. The Middle Ages are often foolishly admired. The Trial of the Templars is of priceless value, not as an example of criminal procedure, but as a revelation of social life. It shows what were the characteristic qualities of the Middle Ages—not piety and chivalry, but violence and dirt and licensed brigandage taking the name of Christ in vain.

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